

THE BOSTON KUGEL

THE BOSTON KAYPRO USERS' GROUP

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

by Lee Lockwood, Co-Director

Welcome to the second issue of the KUGEL. The first issue was so popular that we've "sold out" (accolades to Alan Chapman, the KUGEL's editor, for the fine job). However, if you didn't get a copy all is not lost, the entire issue is available on disk in the BOSKUG library.

In September, we moved our meetings to the Minuteman Regional Tech/Voc School in Lexington (Rte 2A just west of Rte 128), and we are gradually getting used to the new surroundings. Apologies to all who have had trouble finding the way; it's rather byzantine at first, but worth the effort once you're there. We are still working out the logistics of power cords, acoustics, program formats, etc., and hope you are bearing with us. Just like moving into a new home, it takes a while to get unpacked and settled, and to become used to the new neighborhood.

MEETINGS

Our meetings are now on a regular schedule: every 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month. One meeting each month is devoted to a program, the other to workshops. Suresh Shenoy and John Callahan, BOSKUG program co-chairmen, deserve much credit for their work in organizing programs through Spring, 1984.

I especially invite BOSKUG members who have not yet attended meetings at the Minuteman facility to come to one of our workshop meetings where, after a brief presentation, we break down into small working groups around computers. These mini-workshops are on various applications for the Kaypro and vary according to people's interests. At October's workshop meeting, we had a presentation on a Plu*Perfect Writer (an improvement on Perfect Writer which is reviewed in this Kugel), and small "hands-on" workshops in: Plu*Perfect Writer, Wordstar, Perfect Calc, Perfect Filer and Basic.

At future workshop meetings, we plan to have regular groups for each of the Perfect Software programs as well as modem communications, MUMPS, public domain CP/M utilities, and other subjects in which you express interest.

The "Early-Bird" beginner's tutorial, held from 6:30 to 7:30 on the second Tuesday of each month, (11/8, 12/13, 1/10) is going nicely in the capable hands of Kaypro's Mike Weiss. Anyone who has just bought a Kaypro or is thinking of buying one is invited to attend.

MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

If you have never filled out a BOSKUG membership questionnaire, please do so. The questionnaire is our principal means of learning who you are, your interests and skills, and other information necessary to help us determine the kinds of programs and activities BOSKUG should have. It is also used to maintain up-to-date mailing addresses. You can pick up a copy of the questionnaire at any BOSKUG meeting, or by contacting BOSKUG Secretary Diane Bushee (437-2863 days; 787-1824 eves).

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SOFTWARE

Bob Craig, who gave us a wonderful presentation on the MUMPS programming language, is organizing a BOSKUG software evaluation team to identify, access and evaluate some of the more promising software packages that will run on the Kaypro. One of the team's first priorities is to look at alternative database programs to Perfect Filer. If you're interested in working with this group -- you needn't be an expert to contribute -- call Bob at 232-8005 (days).

If you haven't seen it yet, Charlie Bowen, our software co-librarian, has put together a disk of public domain CP/M-based utilities with full documentation that is now available in the library for copying. Great for beginners -- and indispensable for experts!

WANTED: "HARD COPY" LIBRARIAN

We have been accumulating a lot of books, manuals, other users groups' newsletters, etc. in the BOSKUG library.

We would like to organize this material so that members can look at it during meetings and be able to "sign out" pieces to take home between meetings. The main job is getting the material organized. It does not mean a commitment to attend every meeting. It does entail making sure that SOMEBODY brings the library to each meeting, however.

KUGEL ADVERTISING MANAGER

To continue to bring you this newsletter regularly, we need to generate advertising revenue to pay for it. We don't need a lot of advertising -- 2 or 3 pages worth should pay the freight. We need someone to set-up and monitor the advertising. We have ad rate and contract information from other BCS user group newsletters, so much of the planning work is done. The main job will be to sign up advertisers (preferably on 3- or 6-issue contracts) and insure we get the ad copy. BCS will handle the money for us.

If you can help us in either of these important areas, please call me at 965-6343. ■

USER'S CORNER

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

CAMEL - When it asks for a new game, type a lower case "yes" or "y," and CAMEL will restart without responding "Chicken."

STRTRK.BAS works properly with OBASIC. It produces errors when run with MBASIC. ■ (Rick & Libby Hillenbrand)

LADDER - RUNG 2: Jay Giuttari reports from Rhode Island that his 7-year-old daughter, Camille, scored 1,200,000 on Ladder and was still going strong when bedtime arrived. That sounds remarkably like a challenge, doesn't it? Aw-right, you Ladder freaks, let's hear from you. ■

ASCII PRINT WHEEL FOR DAISYWRITER/BROTHER PRINTERS

The standard daisy wheels available for the DaisyWriter and Brother printers have the normal typewriter characters but not ASCII symbols, hence they do match the Kaypro

keyboard. An ASCII-standard daisy wheel is now available in Brougham (Courier) 10 from DATA INTERNATIONAL CORP., 373 Main Street, Stoneham, MA, 438-0300. It is a 10-pitch wheel, but prints very well at 12 cpi. The wheel (part no. AE-13) costs \$30.00, but BOSKUG members get a 15% discount. ■

PRINTER RIBBONS

Getting the best value in printer ribbons involves some investigation. The best buys are not necessarily the lowest priced ribbons. Okidata and similar dot matrix printers use a two-spool, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide ribbon. These ribbons are sold by many mail order firms considerably cheaper than local computer stores, but be careful what you're getting. Many of the "bargain" ribbons are on spools with 5 mm holes which are too large for the 4 mm spindle on the Okidata printer. I found the CORONA 4B ribbon is the right diameter and the right price (\$2.25).

Daisywriters and some other LQP's use the IBM ribbon. There are a number of ribbon types that fit. The least expensive is the carbon film ribbon; it is, however, a one-time use ribbon and is only good for 100,000 characters. Multi-strike ribbons cost almost twice as much; they are also one-time use ribbons, but they print 500,000 characters and they make a better permanent impression. IBM Multi-strike ribbons sell for app. \$7.00 each. Other brands are available in the \$5-6.00 range, but I have found the ALCAR equivalent (No. 36B-Tech III) every bit as good and half the cost (\$3.50).

STATIONERY UNLIMITED, 70 Boston Post Road (Rte 20), Wayland (891-8310) is an excellent source for these or any other ribbons. Their prices are low, and if they don't stock the ribbon you need, they'll get it for you within a week. ■

(Bob Waters)

(cont. p. 5)

REVIEW: THE PERFECT MANUAL FOR THE KAYPRO II

T. Gregory Platt & Roz Van Meter (PeopleTalk Assocs., 1983, \$17.95)

A BEGINNER'S VIEW

by Phyllis Mutschler

It is difficult to characterize THE PERFECT MANUAL for the KAYPRO II as either useful or a complete waste of money. Its utility depends on the clarity of the documentation accompanying your Kaypro software.

The original Perfect Writer documentation, for example, is fairly complete (although presented in the wrong order). TPM has many pages that merely repeat information contained in the original, and it continually directs you to the lessons disk that came with Perfect Writer. It does, however, document a number of Perfect Writer commands which are not found in the PW manual.

With Perfect Calc, however, where a great deal of valuable information is missing from the original manual, TPM provides several pages of suggestions and explanations that comfort and enlighten a frustrated user. TPM shines when it is providing information on sample spreadsheets, common problems, idiosyncrasies and suggestions for using Perfect Calc.

To try out TPM from the perspective of a first-time computer user, I used it for an introduction to Perfect Filer, with which I had no previous experience. In general, TPM is clear in its explanation about how to use the program with the "Individual" and "Organizational" databases provided with the program, however, so isn't the Perfect Filer manual. TPM does include the important admonition that you should build your own database disk, and it tells you how to do this.

What it does not tell you is how to create your own database and how to format a list. It simply directs you to read the chapters in the Perfect Filer manual and perform the tutorials dealing with these difficult tasks. The trouble is that these chapters omit valuable information (e.g., the function of field tags, how to use alternatives in generating mail, etc.) Further, you are expected to be able to generalize from the specifics provided in the tutorials to a wide range of other situations. TPM could have performed a service if it had provided more generic rules for accomplishing these tasks, or by expanding on the original documentation.

(cont. p. 4)

A PRO'S VIEW

by Suresh V. Shenoy

If you have just purchased your Kaypro and decided to read through the CP/M manual first - chances are that you will be totally exasperated and give up!! What is needed even more than "user-friendly" computers, is "user-friendly" documentation. Clear, concise, step-by-step instructions on how to use what you have just bought. The Perfect Manual sets out to do just that, but it only partially succeeds. I give the manual a qualified nod of approval.

The introduction to CP/M in this manual is perhaps its greatest asset. It is a far cry from the intimidating technical dissertation from DIGITAL RESEARCH and nonchalantly passed off as a user's manual by KAYPRO. The authors exhibit a good working knowledge of the most common CP/M commands and help a first-time user quickly become familiar with their usage.

The rest of the manual is anything but "Perfect." But then neither is the software that this manual is supposed to help us learn. The Perfect Software documentation included with your Kaypro is illustrative and detailed. However, its sequence of instructions is questionable. Consequently, first-time users find themselves flipping back-and-forth through the pages trying to keep the logic straight. The Perfect Manual authors have tried to eliminate that and lend a sense of continuity to the reading. However, in the process of simplification, you are continually referred to the original documentation and lessons. In other words, TPM, at best, is a supplement to the original documentation, not a substitute for it.

Some of TPM's unique features include discussions on the undocumented commands (e.g. Write Region command), common questions and problems, idiosyncrasies of Perfect Filer and Perfect Calc. It is consoling to the first-time user to know that there might be problems in the software that everyone encounters and not take it personally!

In conclusion, TPM can be useful to a novice in that it provides easy-to-read instructions without complicated "computerese," but for serious program applications and genuine problem-solving, there is no substitute for hands-on practice. And, of course, active participation in BOSKUG meetings! ■

BULLETIN BOARDS

BOSKUG currently has three screens on the BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY BULLETIN BOARD (969-9660). Latest information about meetings, speakers, and other BOSKUG doings can be accessed by logging onto the BCS board and choosing menu option "Manufacturers K-R."

Here is a listing of bulletin boards we know about. Let us know of changes to this list as well as others you find. Unless other noted, all are free, operate 24 hours and are 300-baud.

BOSTON AREA

BINEX	423-6985
BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY	969-9660
BOSTON BULLET.....	266-7789
HEATH (after 6 p.m.).....	237-1511
KAYPRO NORTHEAST REGION OFFICE (Framingham) (Mon-Thurs, 5 p.m. - 9 a.m.)	620-1734
LAWRENCE HOSPITAL	623-2119
MACRO EXCHANGE (Billerica)	667-7388
NEW ENGLAND COMPUTER SOCIETY	646-3610
SUPERBRAIN (Lexington).....	862-0781

OUT OF STATE

NATIONAL KAYPRO USERS GROUP (Chicago) (New number as 10/1/83).....	(312) 882-6747
NJ KUG	(201) 272-1874
STEVE SANDERS (Tampa, Fl)	(813) 937-3608
(Has Kaypro version of Modem 7-11 available for downloading)	
TORONTO (CP/M)	(416) 826-5398
WARD CHRISTENSEN (Chicago)	(312) 789-0499
PEOPLE LINKS (New York City).....	(212) 877-7703
ARCNET (New York City).....	(212) 881-7370
MEET YOUR MATE (NY City - Spicy!)	(212) 541-5975

A BEGINNER'S VIEW (cont. from p. 3)

I did find the chapter on "Additional CP/M Commands" useful, especially the discussion of PIP. All told, there were perhaps 30 pages of prose in these sections that make life with a Kaypro more pleasant.

TPM's tone is supposed to be user friendly, but I found it cutesy and cloying. The authors seem to assume that users: 1) need constant reminders to 'warm boot' when inserting a new disk into a drive (which they incorrectly say is "CTRL-X CTRL-C" instead of just "CTRL-C"); 2) have not read or understood the introductory chapters of the various manuals provided with the Perfect software; and 3) will not

notice how much TPM duplicates the Perfect manuals.

In summary, TPM may prove useful to the novice, especially when working with Perfect Calc. But, in my view, it's not worth \$18. When you're ready to tackle Perfect Calc, borrow a copy for a few days, if you can. ■

[Ed. note: We spotted another Kaypro manual on the shelf at B. Dalton Booksellers the other day, which, on a quick reading, appears more complete. THE KAYPRO USER'S HANDBOOK, (Weber Systems, Inc., 1983, \$14.95) covers operation of the Kaypro II, all the Perfect Software, Profit Plan, S and M Basic and Word Plus. We'll try to review it in the next KUGEL.]

INTRODUCING...

THE SWAP SHOPPE

A new KUGEL feature - a classified ad section for selling, buying or swapping computer-related items or services. SWAP SHOPPE ads are free to BOSKUG members for personal notices; there is a \$5.00 per ad charge for non-members or commercial ventures. Ads must be 50 words or less, including contact information.

Although we will try to insure that all ads are legitimate, The KUGEL accepts no responsibility for the quality, terms or condition of any product or service advertised. We also reserve the right to refuse or edit any copy we feel is inappropriate.

Include your name, address and phone with your submission if is not included in the ad copy. Send copy (with payment, when appropriate, made out to BOSTON COMPUTER SOCIETY) to: KUGEL o/c Alan Chapman, 70 Gregory Rd., Framingham, MA 01701. ■

PERFECT FILER CONSULTING - I am available to consult on the uses of Perfect Filer, teach you how to use it or create databases for you. \$35/hour or \$200/day. Contact Mike Holmes at 15 Arnold Place, New Bedford, MA 02740, (617) 993-0156. ■

THE BACKSIDER - 5¼" floppy kits for making single-sided disks into double-sided. Doubles your disk capacity; simple to use; pays for itself with less than one box of disks. \$12.00 at BOSKUG meetings; \$13.00 by mail. Alan Chapman, 70 Gregory Rd., Framingham, MA 01701, (617) 877-6848. ■

LIBRARY NOTES
by Charlie Bowen (Co-Librarian)

THE NEW UTILITY DISK

If you haven't been to a meeting since September, you probably haven't heard about our new utility disk, BOSKUG.101. It contains a collection of some of the most generally useful programs we have in the library:

- Directory programs which arrange the directory of files on a disk in alphabetical order and tell you their length, the free space remaining, and other helpful information.
- Disk housekeeping programs to let you look through the files on a disk, erase, copy, rename or view them at will without all the finicky little keystrokes required by CP/M.
- Programs to print out files or display them on the screen, and programs to "unerase" files and to make disks containing bad sectors usable again.

All that, and more. And, we've taken special care with the documentation so that even the most inexperienced users can begin taking advantage of some of these conveniences almost immediately.

The disk boots up to a menu program (named INTRO) which will guide the user through its several documentation files. (One of these is a short introduction for experienced users, so they won't have to bother with more instructions than they need.)

If you are copying the disk at a meeting, be sure to type "INTRO" at the point where the COPY program tells you to

"Please enter an initial command line (name) If you push RETURN only you will get the normal A> prompt.==>." This will make the menu program come on as soon as you boot up the disk (i.e. insert it and push RESET).

If you have already copied the disk without doing this, it's easy to fix. Just put your CP/M disk in Drive A and your copy of the utility disk in Drive B. Type COPY to start the Copy program, and select 'O' ('Other') from the main menu. A new menu will give you a long list of functions to choose from. Choose 'S' ('Sysgen'). This will do the same thing as the last part of the disk-copying function: "writing CP/M to the diskette" without affecting anything else that is already on it. You will immediately be asked to "enter an initial command line" just as you are in the COPY program. Type "INTRO" and hit the carriage return. (If rearranging the disk this way seems like too much trouble, you can run the INTRO program anytime you want to just by typing 'INTRO'.)

A note of warning for KAYPRO 10 users. There is a program on the disk called MAKE.COM whose function is changing the user numbers of files. This capability may be of interest only to owners of the hard-disk system, but unfortunately we have received a report that it doesn't work properly with that system. It can be used with care, but since it doesn't check for filename duplication in different user areas, it can overwrite files. (We'll be removing this program from the next edition of the disk.)

We have other disks ready to copy or in preparation: communications, languages, games. Look for the updated bulletins each meeting at the library desk.

USER'S CORNER

(cont. from p. 2)

KEYBOARD TEMPLATES

Find it difficult to remember commands you don't use every day? A keyboard template might help. It's a flat piece of plastic that fits over your computer's keyboard and contains all the commands for a particular program, such as Perfect Writer or Wordstar. You don't have to plow through a crowded desk to find a command card; the template has the answer

right on the keyboard. A keyboard template sells for about \$20, although it probably cost only a dollar or so to manufacture. Nevertheless, you might find the convenience worth the money.

I use templates from two manufacturers. My Wordstar template is Kleertex brand from Creative Computer Products (see Sept. Pro/Files, pps. 29 and 33). My Perfect Writer template was made by CMB Enterprises. The Kleertex is the better of the two. The color is a

nonglare gray, the letters are readily legible, and the plastic is heavy gauge. In contrast, the CMB template is a cream color that can cause glare; the lettering is small and faint; and the thin plastic has a tendency to jam keys. Ironically, putting the CMB template over the Kleertex raises it enough to eliminate the jamming problem. The CMB template is a few months old; perhaps the newer ones are better.

(Nat Weiner)

HOW TO IMPROVE ON PERFECT-ION:

PLU*PERFECT WRITER
by Lee Lockwood

What's more perfect than Perfect?
Plu*Perfect Writer!

The Perfect Writer that many of us know and love (after all, it came bundled with the computer) is a pretty good word processor. However, perfect it ain't. Long after the demise of the early bugs, we still must put up with a program that won't do a lot of things it ought to (or we'd like it to). For instance, there's no easy way to reconfigure your numerical keypad so that a single keystroke invokes a sequence like CTRL--X, CTRL--C. And it doesn't let you save the same file to more than one disk or simply change document disks without exiting back to CP/M and doing a "warm boot."

Well, some brilliant folks out west have come to our rescue. Calling themselves PluPerfect Software, they have come up with a "patch" to old Perfect Writer that produces some amazing improvements and gives you an enhanced version of CP/M 2.2 in the bargain. And, at \$25.00 for the whole thing (\$20 through BOSKUG), it's a bargain!

Here are some of the things Plu*Perfect Writer does:

1) WARM BOOT FROM WITHIN PERFECT WRITER. Just type CTRL--X W each time you change disks, and presto: the message "Warm Boot" appears on your screen! This means you can back up a file by saving it to two different disks, or that you can insert a file from another disk into one you're working on--all without going in and out through the menu.

2) LOOK AT A DIRECTORY OF A DISK FROM WITHIN PERFECT WRITER. No need to go back to the menu. By typing CTRL--X ? you get a message: "Directory for Drive (?)" Typing "a" or "b" gives you both the directory and the amount of space remaining on the disk - critical information that's not on the PW directories.

3) CHANGE THE SIZE OF THE SWAP FILE. Remember the mysterious PWCONFIG, which the Perfect Writer Manual mentions but Kaypro doesn't package on its installation disk? PWCONFIG allows you to change the size of the swap file. Do you

need that? Well, if you're working on a text longer than about 15 pages, you're going to spend a lot of time with fingers poised over the keyboard waiting waiting for the computer to stop "swapping" text. A 64K swap file is okay for letters and shorter documents, but not for a novel (or even a short story).

PluPerfect provides a program called SWPCNFIF that lets you design a swap file of any size up to the maximum size of the disk, as long as it's a multiple of 8K. A PW edit disk with a small swap file (say 16K) would be adequate for writing short letters, and the free space could be useful for letterheads, letter templates, memo forms, envelopes, etc.

4) RECONFIGURE THE KEYPAD. The regular Kaypro configuration program is very limited, and the "bindings" program, deep in the bowels of PFCONFIG, is difficult and dangerous going. Plu*Perfect's SWPCNFIF program lets you easily assign any PW command to any blue key on the keyboard. For instance, when I'm in PW and want to save a file, I type the Enter key. "Find File" (CTRL--X F) is the period on my keypad. I can turn these changes on and off from within PW simply by typing CTRL--X K.

5) SWITCH TO OVERTYPE MODE. By typing CTRL--X CTRL--O while in Perfect Writer, you begin overtyping whatever text is there. Type the same command again and you switch back to PW's normal "insert" mode. (Or you can configure one of the blue keys to do this.)

6) ENJOY AN ENHANCED VERSION OF CP/M 2.2. One improvement is a new copy program called "Fastcopy" which is twice as fast as the current Kaypro Copy program. Another feature augments the resident CP/M TYPE command to allow you to scroll the file forwards or backwards one screen or one line at a time. It even lets you print the file by adding a "P" after the filename.

There's more to Plu*Perfect Writer than I've space to describe here. This program is a rarity in the software world today: a genuine bargain.

(I'm typing my blue ENTER key to save this. Now the blue O key to exit. That's the way computers ought to be!)

If you'd like to buy a copy at the BOSKUG discount, send your name, address and a check for \$20.00, made out to ROBERT WATERS, to Bob at 23 Derby Lane, Weston, MA 02193.■

SMARTKEY

by Alan Chapman

SMARTKEY is just that. It is a superb CP/M utility program designed to provide intelligent keyboard facilities. Its applications are limited only by your imagination. Simply described, it allows you to redefine any and as many keys on your keypad as you desire to perform any single or multiple keystroke function. It allows you to turn your keypad, for example, into a dynamic editing tool that can call up entire paragraphs or even files with a single keystroke.

SMARTKEY works on any CP/M-based system or program, and is easily adapted to any standard CP/M-86, PC-DOS or MS-DOS system. It is hardware independent and can be transported from program to program or machine to machine. Best of all, it's inexpensive and easy to use.

SMARTKEY has three program elements:

SMARTKEY.COM is the basic command program. It can operate in either ASCII or HEX mode to suit your needs.

FIXKEY.COM is a menu-driven program which allows you to create and change permanent definition files and turn SMARTKEY on and off.

USRPATCH.COM contains user patch area listings for adapting SMARTKEY to specific needs and allows you to permanently change the program's operating key (<ESC>) to any other key. (This must be done with Perfect Writer, which uses <ESC> as a command key.)

I acquired SMARTKEY to help me move back and forth between Perfect Writer and WordStar. I use both programs frequently, and I am constantly confusing the editing commands. I wanted a program that would let me create a single set of commands to perform the same functions in both programs. Most of the available programs fell short in some way: PLU*-PERFECT works only with Perfect Writer; K-KEY and WORDKEY severely limit the number of keystrokes you can assign to a key. All three permit you to redefine only the 14-key numeric keypad and the 4 cursor keys. Finally, I tried SMARTKEY, and it exceeded even my wildest dreams. (Well, maybe not my wildest... but certainly the ones about word processing!)

As a starting point, I mapped a sequence of commands for Kaypro's 14-key numeric keypad, which accounted for my most common editing commands (i.e., cursor movements, deletions, block moves).

Using SMARTKEY, I redefined the numeric keypad to perform each function with the same single keystroke in both PW and WS. It only took a couple of minutes to set up the definition files for each program. When SMARTKEY and a definition file are called up from CP/M, they become "invisible," serving as an overlay on another .COM program, but not interfering with its operation.

For added convenience, I used the Sysgen feature of the COPY program to have the program disks cold-boot SMARTKEY and the appropriate definition file directly into RAM, so that I can go directly to word processing with my numeric keypad all set for use.

You can have as many definition files as you like on a disk, and you can load and save them as you need them.

SMARTKEY is totally interactive. At any point in a document you can add or change the definition of any key on the keyboard without leaving the document. At the end of the session, you can choose to make the key definitions in SMARTKEY permanent by calling up FIXKEY and establishing a permanent definition file, or you can discard them by simply cold-booting. If you began with a permanent definition file and made changes which you don't want to keep, cold-booting discards the changes and leaves your original definition file intact.

Any application which requires repetitive strings or has cumbersome keystrokes is fair game for SMARTKEY. It is excellent for inserting frequently used BASIC or other programming language subroutines.

Okay, guy, nothing's that good. What's the drawback? Well, there is one, albeit minor. SMARTKEY (4k), FIXKEY (11k) and the Definition files (1k each) should reside on the program disk. With WordStar, Filer and Calc this is no problem, but to fit these files on the Perfect Writer disk on a Kaypro II, you must reduce the SWAP file to 48k. On the Kaypro 4 and 10, there is no such problem.

SMARTKEY is sold by HERITAGE SOFTWARE, INC., 2130 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90007. The SMARTKEY version I have (3.2) retails for \$60. The latest version, SMARTKEY II, sells for \$89, and has, I understand, some added features. The documentation is brief, well-written and well-organized. There are also two companion programs available: SMARTPRINT, which allows your word processing program to use all of your printer's features, and a SPOOL/UNSPPOOL utility. ■

"FLEXIBLE PRINTING" WITH PERFECT WRITER
ON DOT MATRIX PRINTERS
by David G. Hoag

As you read the printer manual for your dot matrix printer, you will probably discover appealing options that aren't mentioned in the formatting chapters of the Perfect Writer manual. For example: half-line superscripts and subscripts instead of the full line provided by PW; a clean, continuous underline instead of the individual "dashes" under each character that PW prints; the ability to change character size within your text to print a large eye-catching title; or the ability to change type style in a document. Here's how you can do these things...and more, depending on the capability of your printer.

The key to all this flexibility is a valuable feature of PW that allows you to insert a character translation table between the character you type to the screen and the character code sent to your printer when you format your text. With this, selected characters can be used to initialize special printing features that you want to appear in your document.

In the following description, I assume you are familiar with the PFCONFIG procedure of PW. If not, it's not too difficult: Put a PW Edit Disk in drive A (use a copy for safety) and PW Installation Disk in B; boot with cont-C; and from the A> prompt, type "b:pfconfig <CR>"; then follow the screen instructions and menus. (I will identify the menu items you should be using with quotation marks.)

You will also have to search your printer user manual for the initialization codes for the printer features that in ASCII command character form. These codes are either "Escape" commands (the symbol "^[" followed by some character) or "Control" commands (the symbol "^_" followed by some character).

[Note: Unless you have the new character-generation chip in your Kaypro, the "^_" will appear on your screen as an up-arrow; however it means the same thing.]

You may have to use an ASCII table to convert from the form given in your printer manual to this command character form. You'll have to decide what little-used characters from your keyboard you will change into these command codes to the printer. Finally, you'll have to name this new "printer type" you are going to create.

As an example, here's how I "formatted" for my OKIDATA 92 printer. Other printers will probably be slightly different, but the following four steps should still apply:

STEP 1: On the first PFCONFIG menu, select "Define Printer Types" (#2) and then select "Define a new printer type" (#2). Name your printer format (I chose "OKIf" for OKIDATA flexible). The values for each of the new printer definition items should be identical to your default printer type, except for Items 16 and 17. (Your default printer type is identified in "Select the default printer type." Its definition is listed under "Update existing printer definition.") Item 16, regarding translation tables, should be answered "yes," and Item 17, which asks which translation table you wish to use, should be answered "0".

STEP 2: Return to the main PFCONFIG menu and select "Edit character translation tables" (#) to modify translation table 0 for your new use. Before you do this, it would be wise to go through the existing Translation Table 0 to be certain the characters you are translated from and to correspond one-to-one. Correct any differences, then make the appropriate changes for the keyboard characters you are going to use for printer commands. I made the following translations for my OKIDATA printer:

Dec.	Key	To	Command	Okidata use
126	~ (tilde)	-->	^[(escape)	Multiple use
96	` (accent grave)	-->	^^ (Cont-^)	10 char/inch
92	\ (back slash)	-->	^\ (Cont-\)	12 char/inch
124	(vertical)	-->	^] (Cont-])	17 char/inch
38	& (ampersand)	-->	^_ (Cont-_)	doubling char

STEP 3: Use these newly defined key characters in your document as you type it to indicate the printing characteristics you want. For example, in my translation table, typing "Htext I" would make "text" print in enhanced form, and "&text" would make "text" print at 5 CPI in a line otherwise printing at 10 char/inch. Your printer user manual will tell you what you can do. To avoid extra white space in your final document, be sure to type the command characters right next to the text, with no spaces between.

STEP 4: When you "format" your finished document for print with PF, use option "D"
(cont. p. 12)

BYTES, NIBBLES & BITS...

PERFECT SOFTWARE'S KayPro Technical Support is now located at their Berkeley, CA office. The Eugene, OR Tech Support Center was closed on Sep 15. Refer questions on Perfect Software to:

PERFECT SOFTWARE, INC.
702 Harrison St.
Berkeley, CA 94710
(415) 524-1926 (M-F, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.,
West Coast time) ■

BUSINESS COMPUTER NETWORK (BCN) UPDATE

The BCN network publicized in Kaypro's Pro/Files (Sep/Oct, 83) current supports @uonly@u the Hayes Smartmodem. BCN offered Kaypro owners a special deal on the Anchor Signalman Mark VII and supporting software. However, the modifications Anchor made to the Mark VII make it unusable with any other software, and it doesn't work properly with the Signalman version of BCN's own software.

BCN is working on debugging their Signalman-version software as well as software versions for Novation and U.S. Robotics modems, and they will be sending us copies for the BOSKUG library as soon as available.

If you didn't see Pro/Files, BCN is a subscription network which allows you to log on to most of the major national network services (e.g., The Source, CompuServe, Connexions, etc.) through a single membership at a modest 25-cents-per-connect fee. To advertise their service, they included free telecommunications software for a Hayes Smartmodem/Kaypro combination in Pro/Files. More information and free software is available from the BOSKUG library or by calling BCN toll-free at (800) 446-6255. ■

NEW KAYPRO MODELS

After months of rumors, Kaypro has finally announced an 8/16 bit machine that will run MSDOS software. Essentially upgrades of existing Kaypros, the "Kaypro II Plus 88" and "Kaypro 4 Plus 88" come equipped with a co-processor made by Kaypro and 256K of RAM.

In the 8-bit mode, the machine will run all CP/M 80 software and allows access of most of the RAM as a third disk-drive. In 16-bit mode, it will run all IBM software written for MSDOS, but without graphics capability. Both machines come bundled with the usual CP/M software, plus MSDOS.

Simultaneously, Kaypro announced that upgrade co-processor boards for the II and the 4 are available from SWP, Inc., Arlington TX. However, SWP has been advertising such boards for nearly a year already, so perhaps this isn't really anything new. ■

BUNDLED SOFTWARE

Perfect Software is once again being bundled with the Kaypro 4 and 10, retroactive to August 1. That means that your dealer should furnish this software to you at no cost; or you can copy it in the BOSKUG library. (We also have Wordstar available for II owners.)

The Uniform program, which allows the Kaypro to read from and write to other disk formats, has now been configured for the 4 and the 10. A limited version (5 formats) is bundled with these machines and is available from dealers or our library. The full version of this marvelous program, also available for all Kaypros, works on about 20 different formats including MSDOS, TRSDOS and LDOS. It retails for \$50 from Micro Solutions in DeKalb, IL (815-756-3421, attn Ron Proesel), or from Kaypro dealers. ■

REPAIRS

For those having repair problems, SORBUS, a national repair service, now does Kaypro-authorized warranty repairs and seems to do them reliably and quickly at a decent price. The local SORBUS facility is at 209 W. Central St., Natick, 237-4550. Haven't heard any complaints so far.

We would like to know more about members' experiences, both positive and negative, with Kaypro dealers and repair services so that we can answer more intelligently when prospective buyers call us asking for recommendations. If you have any information you'd like to share, please drop a line or speak up at a meeting. It will all be kept confidential, of course. But it would be very helpful to know more, since so many dealers are springing up these days. ■

KAYPRO EARNINGS

Finally, for those worried that Kaypro might follow Osborne into the computer graveyard: Kaypro Corp. has reported net earnings for the year ended Aug. 31 of \$12.9 million, on sales of \$75.1 million. Kaypro shipped 53,000 computers that year. On the debit side, Kaypro common stock -- which opened at \$10 a share in September -- is now selling around \$7. ■

IF SAM SPADE HAD A KAYPRO....OR

THE CASE OF THE UNDOCUMENTED
PERFECT WRITER COMMANDS
by Alan Chapman

It was late. Past midnight. I was about to wrap it up for the night when I heard a soft knock on my office door. I quickly killed the lights. My right hand went to the desk drawer and closed around the handle of the .37 (a .38 with a low IQ); my left hand instinctively went to the keyboard, the fingers rapidly typed CTRL-X, CTRL-S. Now I was ready for this unexpected visitor.

"Who's there," I said in my best Bogart voice. All I could see through the frosted glass was a spot of light.

"I know how to change the indent column, Sam," a muffled voice answered.

"Yea, what's it going to cost me?" I edged along the wall toward the door.

"A disk, Sam, just a blank disk. Open up quickly before someone sees me."

The voice was soft, intriguing. I decided to take a chance. I threw the door open and stepped back as a lovely pixel sashayed in. I sensed immediately that she was no ordinary pixel; she was brighter than any I had ever seen. We stared at each other for a long minute. She spoke first, softly, with only a trace of a Swedish accent. "I can also tell you how to insert a file into text."

I knew I was in love, but business had to come first. "How do I know you're not lying to me....the book doesn't say I can do those things."

"Come on over to your Kaypro, Sam, I'll show you." She took my hands, they trembled; she guided them to the keyboard. I could see her beautiful reflection in the screen as she instructed me to type the following commands:

CTRL-X . SETS INDENT command for defining an indent column which will automatically wrap the text. This feature is similar to a variable tab setting, but limited to a single column. It can be set by positioning the cursor in the column you want to wrap on, or by typing ESC...(n) (n=column number) before typing this command. It is dynamic; it will disappear when you file the document.

CTRL-X F SETS FILL COLUMN command changes the right hand fill column to allow you

to make the line width on screen anything you like. It works in the same manner as the Set Indent command, either by positioning the cursor to the column or by preceding the command with an ESC...(n). The Set Fill command also is dynamic and disappears when you file the document. (However, the created text retains its format until you change it.)

[To remember the indent or fill column numbers in a particular file, put them in a "@Comment()" line the beginning of the file after the "@Style()" line.]

CTRL-X I - INSERT A FILE at the cursor position. When typed, the screen command line (line 24) will ask, "File to Find <CR>:" Fill in the drive and file name, and it will copy that file into the current file beginning at the cursor position.

CTRL-X R - WRITE A REGION of a document to a separate file. Simply insert the Set Mark (ESC...Space Bar) at the beginning of the region you wish to write, move the cursor to the end of the region, type CTRL-X R. PW will respond, "Write Region to File<CR>:" Name the new document you wish to create with the region and voila!, you've done it. The command does not delete the region from the original document, it copies it, so it exists in both files.

CTRL-X > INDENTS AND CTRL-X < UNDEENTS an entire section of your document at once. Set the Indent Column (CTRL-X .), then Set Mark (ESC...Space bar) at the beginning of the region you want indented, move the cursor to the end of the region and type this indent (or undent) command.

ESC...J INDENTS NEXT LINE and ESC...O INDENTS PREVIOUS LINE when typed at the end of a line of text. They indent the next/last line to the same value as the line you have just typed. These commands are independent of the Indent Column command; you must manually indent one line with the TAB key. You can repeat this procedure as often as needed to indent a block of text. When you're done, simply hit <CR> to resume using the normal left margin.

ESC...S CENTERS A LINE OF TEXT on the screen in the exact columns it will print (in verbatim mode) without having to adjust for the @ style command information. Useful when you want to see how things are going to line up when printed. If you intent to print in Text mode, you will need to insert the "@Center()" command for printing purposes.

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BOSTON KAYPRO USERS GROUP (BOSKUG) MEETING SCHEDULE

The Kaypro Users' Group of the Boston Computer Society meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at the Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School, Route 2A (Marrett Road), Lexington.

Nov 22 - 7:30 p.m. MODEMS - Speaker: Jay Sage. The use and application of various modems; public domain software; bulletin board services.

Dec 13 - 6:30 p.m. Tutorial - Mike Weiss
7:30 p.m. GAMES NIGHT - Conducted by Seth Holmes and Paul Evans. All the goodies you can play on a Kaypro. Workshops follow presentation.

Dec 27 - 7:30 p.m. WORKSHOP MEETING Bring your Kaypro!

Jan 10 - 6:30 p.m. Tutorial - Mike Weiss
7:30 p.m. DATABASES - Mike Holmes compares Perfect Filer & Dbase II. Workshops follow.

Jan 24 - 7:30 p.m. THE CARE & FEEDING OF A KAYPRO
Speaker: Tom Barraford, Microsail Computers. Maintenance tips; IBM Software for Kaypro.

Your ideas for lectures or panel discussion topics and volunteers to participate in the programs are more than welcome. Contact Program Chairman Suresh Shenoy (655-6402 - days; 862-5173 - eves).

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THE BOSTON KAYPRO USERS' GROUP (BOSKUG)
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FLEXPRINT
(cont. from p. 8)

- Format for a different device type," and name answer with the name you gave your flexible printer type, then select "G" to format the file for print.

These new features work only for text you format with your new "printer type." Text normally formatted will allow you to use all the keys with their original meaning unchanged.

In a future article, I'll explain how you can expand flexible printing for use with a dot matrix printer to allow you to insert entirely new characters within your text (such as a little happy face), and how you can draw simple pictures on your printer and nest them neatly within your text.

I'll try to answer questions by phone, between 7 and 9 evenings, (617) 533-6353. I have some more detailed explanations which I'll send you in your stamped self-addressed envelope. Include an extra unlicked stamp or two to compensate me for xeroxing costs.

David G. Hoag
116 Winthrop St.
Medway, MA 02053. ■

↓ The
↑ Boston
→ Computer
← Society

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